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ABSTRACT

This publication is composed of four parts. Part I, The Final Report, consists of the program foundations, description of the target group, description of resources, analysis of processes developed, creating the resource role, creation awareness, developing a problem solving orientation, curriculum integration, evolution of the group process, overall recommendations, initial guidelines and a projection of the program's future. Part II, Suggested Guidelines for Consideration in Developing Urban Alternative Schools or Open Classrooms, includes basic organizational information, resources, overall program organization and project selection, and evaluation. Part III, The Evaluative Process, lists the results of pre-testing, conclusions from post-test evaluation, a critique of the evaluation techniques and recommendations for evaluation. Part IV, The Appendices, includes a definition of environment, the evaluative instrument, sample communications to the community, sample correspondence of the participants, and a copy of an article to be published on the project. (BT)

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I

Final Report

Final Report

Urban Environmental Education Demonstration

I. Program Foundations

A. Program Goal

"To develop an instructional program (a transferrable model) aimed at producing inner city youth that are knowledgeable concerning their social, economic, and biophysical environment, aware of the basic methods to be employed in solving problems involving these components, and psychologically fit, motivated, and skilled to work toward their solution.

B. Program Objectives

To help youth increase their:

1. Knowledge about urban environmental problems in their social, economic, political, and biophysical contexts.
2. Knowledge of problem solving techniques.
3. Ability to analyze issues and working toward their solution.
4. Coping skills for dealing with environmental problems.
5. Self concept regarding their ability to work toward the solution of environmental problems.

C. Program Assumptions

1. That the environment is the totality of one's surroundings. It involves more than biological factors affected by problems like air pollution and solid waste problems, it also includes social factors that affect problems like poverty and racism.

2. Awareness of environmental issues is not enough to develop an environmentally active citizenry. Experiences in solving problems are critical to achieving the stated goal.
3. When youth are given a chance to become involved in relevant issues and become part of a decision-making process, they will respond creatively and learn as a result of their experiences regardless of their original motivation.
4. Youth are more likely to throw themselves wholeheartedly into any project if they themselves have a meaningful role in the selection and planning of the project.
5. Learning takes place through the active behavior of the learner.

II. Description of the Target Group

Twenty black inner city youth between the ages of 15 and 19 participated in this urban environmental education program. Although the group was small they represented a visible social economic spectrum. They were from lower-ADC and middle class family backgrounds. Most expressed a desire to continue their education beyond high school. They possessed a common interest in wanting to know more about environmental issues that affected them personally and their community.

Based on our written pre-test instrument, we learned that although they tended to be "joiners", most had little experience in programs aimed directly at solving community problems. The most fundamental and important information gathered from the pre-test was that the participants had a low

degree of faith in themselves and the political system to make significant changes in the quality of their environment.*

This information was interpreted as an indication of the participant's self-concept being eroded by social and political injustice.

Although the participants appeared to represent a variety of socio-economic, academic, and political histories, the program staff does not assume this group is a representative sample of urban youth in Detroit or the United States.

III. Description of Resources

A. Space—The Northwestern Christian Church was used for most classes due to its close proximity to Mackenzie High School, where most program participants attended school. Some sessions were held at Mackenzie High School St. Luke's Parrish, and the Virginia Park Rehabilitation Center when the students met with local citizen groups in those sections of the community.

B. Equipment—Resource equipment included a rented movie projector, tape recorder, video tape recorder, inexpensive cameras, and rented city buses and university vans.

C. Resource Materials--These consisted of articles from periodicals like "City" and "Parks and Recreation" magazines. Information was also obtained from books, such as Poverty in America by Clark Kornbluh, The Life

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* A more detailed discussion of the evaluation instrument and their results is in Section VI, The Evaluation Process.

and Death of Great American Cities by Jane Jacobs, and The Last Landscape by William Whyte. Other materials included pamphlets, social resources guides, and government documents from community service organizations concerned with the spectrum of social problems and those concerned with issues like housing, recreation, and planning. Specific information on issues dealing with concentrated code enforcement, recreation standards, population and unemployment statistics came from agencies, such as:

Detroit Housing Commission
Michigan Employment Security Commission
Detroit Commission on Community Relations
City of Detroit Youth Board
Mayor's Commission on Human Resource Development
12th Street Academy
Toronto Transit Authority
Toronto Development Commission
Wayne State University
    Institute for Labor and University Industrial Relations
    Urban Studies Institute
The American Red Cross
The U.S. Census Bureau

D. Personnel--The project directors were Dr. William B. Stapp and Dr. James Swan, both professors in Environmental Education at The University of Michigan. They advised the project staff in preplanning activities, the program direction, and the evaluative instruments. The staff working most directly with the participants included Roselyn Glasser, the principal investigator; Linda Harrison and Artie Franklin, project assistants. Roselyn holds a master degree in Environmental Education from The University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources; Linda is a graduate student in the same program; and Artie Franklin was an undergraduate in a small college in Detroit. Linda and Artie were the only Black members of the staff.

Additional personnel contributed time voluntarily. These included local citizens and cross-disciplinary team of graduate students interested in alternative modes of education and their implementation in school systems.

E. Funds--Cost sharing was provided by the University of Michigan and the U.S. Office of Education. The sum of $3,602 was provided by the University and $13,751 by the government.

F. Cooperative Arrangements--A variety of cooperative arrangements, to obtain materials and resources, were established with community organizations and government agencies as noted in part C of this section. The most intense relationships were established with The Virginia Park Rehabilitation Program, the St. Lukes Parrish Community, and with Mackenzie High School. This involved projects that focussed on housing rehabilitation, developing a neighborhood recreation program and a work-opportunity program. We attempted to maintain ongoing communications with parents, teachers, and community leaders through periodic meetings and newsletters where the progress and problems of the project were discussed. In addition, a line of communications was established with the Model Neighborhood Community Learning Center carrying on similar activities with youth in the Model Cities area. Through our attempts to incorporate this program on a pilot basis at Mackenzie High School, strong ties were established with the school's administration and Board of Education.

IV. Analysis of the Processes Developed

The major process developed in the program included:

A. Creating a resource role among staff.

B. Creating awareness among the participants regarding their environment and its problems.

C. Developing a Problem Solving Orientation.

D. Integrating curriculum, evolving a cooperative group process.

E. Evaluating changes in environmental awareness, attitudes, and problem solving, behavior.

V. Creating the Resource Role

When youth are set free to explore their community's environment for themselves their role as students changes from the tradiational educational dynamic. They are no longer passively absorbing information about their world through the lessons memorized by their teachers. Learning becomes a student-centered rather than teacher directed activity. This student-oriented approach to education was utilized in our free school and can be contrasted to the traditional teaching dynamic with the following models:

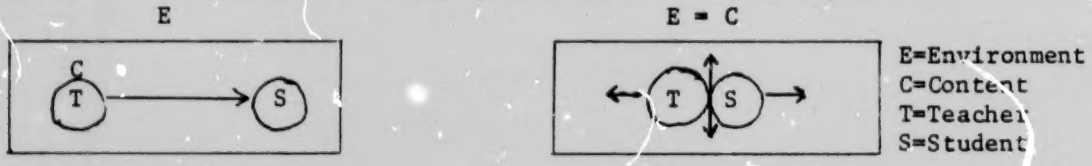

Fig. A-Teacher Directing Learning

B-Teacher student interaction

In the traditional model, Fig. A, the teacher predetermines course content for the student within the environment based on what the teacher has learned previously. What the child learns then is decided by teachers, school administrators, and book publishers. Our decision to use this second model was based on research showing that youth learn better when they are involved in making decisions on what to learn and how to go about learning it. In this model the content was the total environment. The participants and staff explored this environment together and focussed on those aspects of the environment that the participants felt were important to them.

The second critical area dealt with information transfer. Since our assumption was that information is best learned through direct experiences in the environment, the staff served the role as resource people. The participants were encouraged to obtain information on their selected projects through first hand observations, readings, interviews, and group meetings. On our first trip into the community the participants listed problems like air and water pollution, housing, and unemployment as issues they wanted to investigate in Detroit. To gain a greater understanding of these problems from the resident's perspective, the participants made up a survey for interviewing residents. A few of the participants who interviewed residents in a public housing project felt a concern for problems like privacy and drugs. These feelings were the seeds of the group which eventually dealt with the housing issue the second semester.

Critical to implementing successfully the exploratory model were the responses the staff gave to youth in at least two important areas: 1) how we motivated youth to explore their environment; and 2) how we facilitated the transfer of learning.

To motivate the participants to become involved in the decisions determining the nature of community trips and the course's exploratory activities, we tried to show our trust in their ability to make reasonable judgements on the program's activities. For the most part our faith in them was well substantiated. They showed sound judgements about our activities and consistently demonstrated an ability to organize the community trips, to contact resource people, and to successfully make presentations to community residents.

Remaining constantly open to the participant's suggestions also meant there was unanticipated changes in priorities, in problem solving strategies, and in course direction. The staff tried to be responsive and flexible to such changes, recognizing the participants had a fundamental sincerity to make constructive contributions to the program and the community. We found that trusting was an important tool in maintaining attendance and involvement.

One other important part of our role was to recognize that we were dealing with a whole person and not simply a body interested in community problem solving. The participants were involved in a variety of outside activities, such as creating prize winning artwork, acting in school plays, reading Marx and Lenin, and of course the ever popular social aspects of most adolescents. Taking the time to learn about the whole person was both interesting to us and important to the participants. It let them know that we did care about them as people. Equally important, was that in knowing about these so-called "outside interests", we could provide opportunities for them to show-off their competencies to others. The writers wrote letters, the speakers gave presentations, the aspiring photographers took the pictures, and the activists guided much of the political strategy.

VI. Creating Awareness

The education team launched the project by involving the participants in an introduction to the scope of urban issues in Detroit. We hoped that by exposing them to a variety of problems during the first semester, they would be ready to make a decision on a specific issue the following semester. Through the use of cameras and bus tours we tried to expose the students to a variety

of environmental issues. The resource staff began working with the participants in their most immediate environment, their high school. Students, with cameras in hand, were encouraged to take pictures around their school and describe their impressions of each picture. They used words, such as "prison", "jail", and "ugly" to describe their school. Then we rambled through the neighborhood around "Mack" where a mixed perceptions surfaced from "pleasant" and "relaxing" for highly manicured lawns, to "nasty" and "unhealthy" for unkept alleys. Each of their responses was followed by our "Why?". Their response in turn could lead to a discussion of "the problem" of unkept alleys, poor recreation, or unsafe housing.

After a series of these encounters in their local community, we came up with a definition of the environment. The definition came to include "everything around you" and focused on what they felt were the most relevant environmental issues: housing, urban transportation, class differences, youth unemployment and air and water pollution. The participants then compiled a list of places they knew of in Detroit to see what would best exemplify these issues to others in the course. As a result, we took a trip through the Rouge River industrial complex, to a low income housing area, and the 12th Street riot section. Most participants had never visited these areas, although they were only five miles from home. We also surveyed residents about the community problems they thought were most urgent. Here we found racism a major priority amidst the dense air pollution and increasing water pollution in the Rouge River area. We found senior citizens considering pushing drugs in the public housing ghetto and youth fighting to get into the main stream of society by intensely studying their ABC's at the Public School's 12th Street Academy.

Finding a Model Urban Environment

Most of the participants had lived in Detroit all their lives. Many had never traveled very much except into the rural South. None had ever visited another city to study the environment.

Midway through the program we felt we could learn a lot about Detroit from an extended trip to another city. We needed one with visible signs of a higher quality environment than Detroit. A city that might demonstrate sound alternatives to transportations, solid waste, housing, and rehabilitation problems. Toronto is just that type of city.

Such a trip also offered an opportunity for the group to live and work together in a new environment. We felt that the group living experience would also be helpful.

The participants helped us plan the trip by arranging meetings with planners in the Redevelopment Commission, the Transit Authority, and with the Deputy Commission of Police.

We all gained valuable information at each meeting. At the Redevelopment Commission the students discovered that Toronto had a model metropolitan government machinery can affect higher quality urban and regional planning for homes, businesses, and superior municipal services, like their mass transit and waste disposal systems.

To understand the views of the populace toward the Metropolitan form of Government, the students interviewed the directors of several low income community organizations and spoke to teenagers in the black community. We found these people generally supportive of the governmental approach. They

did, however, complain about racism in the city, neglect of lower income people, and the increased opportunities for wealthy to gain political control under this regional governmental system.

Most of our meetings were very informative, but their effectiveness was enhanced by actually riding the mass transit system, and visiting ethnic enclaves, the city hall, the Science Center, Ontario Place, and the rehabilitated downtown.

The staff was immensely impressed by the group's sensitivity to each other. We explored the city together, got lost together, tried to help each other financially, and assisted each other in clarifying positions on issues. These activities helped us to grow as a social unit.

VII. Developing a Problem Solving Orientation

Having gained an awareness of the urban environment through community trips, the participants developed a sense of their own priorities and those of the urban community. We decided to spend a few weeks learning more about the specific nature of selected problems in order for the participants to make a decision about an issue they would like to act on in the second semester.

The issues that students were most interested in were: recreation, class differences, and youth unemployment. By a plurality vote, they selected youth unemployment as the first issue they wanted to explore.

We attempted to define this problem by calling upon local unemployment experts, the use of field trips, library research, and discussions. By the time we were part way through this strategy it was apparent that many of the

participants would rather have studied housing or recreation, causing some of their interest to wane. We were trying to serve one group of youth and not really relating to what was relevant to others. As our overall strategy was to be flexible and relevant, the resource team decided to continue to focus on a variety of issues through community trips. Given enough exposure to their environment, we felt areas of intense interest would evolve naturally.

It was during this period that being a former teacher in the traditional sense created quite a difficult dilemma. December was already here and we knew that to complete a worthwhile project it would take the full second semester.

We really needed some decisions on their general project areas, but we didn't know how or how much to continue to expose them in contrast to how hard we should press them to make a decision. Finally, we decided to do both simultaneously and, fortunately, by January four interest groups had emerged: youth unemployment; housing; recreation; and class differences. It was evident that our total group wasn't really interested in air pollution, water pollution, and solid wastes as their most important priorities. The resource team suspected this might be the case but having a basic natural science orientation we had to do one of two things, readjust our thinking by making a basic decision on how we defined the environment and what was relevant education or try to redirect their choices to areas like the pollutions where we had more familiarity. We could only say no to the second alternative for our desire to serve as a resource for information, to keep a flexible approach and a willingness to learn with the participants, led us to flow with their decisions.

The projects which eventually surfaced included: 1) developing a slide presentation on loans and grants available to low income citizens for rehabilitating their homes; 2) developing a work opportunity program for high school youth to gain job experience; and 3) to help the community develop a recreational area on a vacant lot owned by an industrial firm. Given limitations on the participants' time, their existing skills, and the projects complexity, the resource team felt these projects were quite realistic to attempt.

The Problem Solving Process

Each group approached their issue using the problems solving method. This method emphasized defining the problem, becoming informed and analyzing alternative solutions, choosing the most rational alternative, designing a plan of action, implementing the plan, then evaluating it. To exemplify the problem solving process we can take a look at the progress of the recreation project. To define the problem we surveyed the community to locate recreational facilities that existed in both the black and white sections of the community. The group found very inadequate facilities in the black community and only a bit more adequate in the white community. Then they gathered census figures to determine the numbers and ages of the residents. The students talked with residents and concluded that there was a need for a large recreational facility, a need expressed both by the black and white leadership in the community.

The Black community also needed several smaller recreation lots. Land for both choices was available. One large facility or several smaller ones? These were our alternatives going into step two of the problem solving process.

In this step we had to analyze these alternatives and decide on the best strategy to reach the final choice. How will the racial tension affect the process of developing a large facility in the white community versus a small one in the Black community? Will we lose forever a chance to use a most unique large piece of land if we don't pursue the larger site? Who might discourage developing a better facility? Why? What could we do to anticipate their consensus? How much time do we have? Do we have the needed resources and support? These were questions we debated until we answered them and made our choice in the third step of the problem process where we also devised what we thought was the best possible strategy for reaching our goal.

Our choice was to create the large community facility. To implement our basic strategy, we sought aid from a few community leaders with whom we were working to obtain permission from the company to use the large piece of land. Then with the help of a local recreation planner, several youth and adults an initial site plan was devised. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough community support to develop a true community recreation facility. Though we weren't successful in implementing the plan during the spring, we did stimulate enough interest in the project so that more community planning is slated for the summer.

The other two groups proceeded toward their goals. The housing group prepared a slide presentation on loans and grants available to low income citizens for rehabilitating their homes and the presentation has been given to several community groups. The administrative details have also been worked out for a work study project at Mackenzie High School.

VIII. Curriculum Integration

It was also apparent while proceeding through the projects that there was no one subject discipline to describe the activities. It was an integrated approach. As an example, the students in the housing study learned a great deal about code enforcement, the social misery of the poor housing syndrome, the economics of rehabilitation, the politics of improving housing conditions, the art of sensitive communications to residents and community administrators, the use of writing skills, and enough information to develop an effective slide presentation on ways residents can obtain money to rehabilitate their homes. Each of the projects had a variety of similar experiences that stimulated feelings and knowledge about the student's own environment.

IX. Evolution of the Group Process

One of our most fundamental criticisms of traditional education has been its inability to develop citizens with the self-confidence and skills to effectively deal with environmental issues. The major emphasis in our program was to provide a supportive learning environment. In such a learning setting the participants could gain the self-confidence they needed first to communicate their thoughts on issues to one another. Having exchanged ideas as a group they should be able to analyze what they want to do about the problem and agree on an action plan for resolving it. A second need is for them to develop the confidence to bring their thoughts to the adult community and effectively pursue change. To accomplish this the participants

required a continuing series of opportunities to interact in a group process, making decisions then testing them with the real world in the context of a high degree of peer and adult reinforcement.

By heightening the participants' environmental awareness through discussions of community and camera encounters, the group found a framework within which to communicate their feelings about their environment. These discussions formed the basis for group interaction concerning their environment. To augment this process, the resource staff encouraged the participants to make group decisions about course content including future community encounters, project areas, and problem strategies. One of the major difficulties the participants had in adjusting to the program was the responsibility of making these decisions. Early in the course many hesitated to initiate suggestion or come to consensus. This greatly inhibited a vital group process. In time, however, they grew more confident of our faith in their ability to make rational decisions. Additionally, when they became involved in the problem solving process where they could relate alternatives to a more concrete project goal, some of their early hesitations to make decisions faded.

As a case study of how the group process evolved let us consider the participants who eventually concentrated on the work opportunity program. From the outset they knew each other from school, but had not worked together as a group that openly exchanged ideas, deriving consensus, and implementing their decision. To generate more group interaction, the staff opened a variety of opportunities for them to make and implement decisions on what they wanted to do in their community encounters. Most seemed reluctant to assume a decision-making role. They appeared to expect the staff to make decisions for them, even in identifying places they could explore in Detroit's environment. Decision making for them seemed particularly difficult when they tried identifying

their priority issues. This response was understandable considering their educational history. Most had had few, if any, opportunities to make decisions significantly affecting course content. The transition, then, to having more control over their education was slow.

Their decision to deal with the problem of youth unemployment, did seem to solidify the group around a very relevant common concern. After only a few sessions they had defined the problem, developed some alternative solutions, and selected their strategy for implementing their choice. The staff encouraged this heightened group involvement by helping them articulate their views, organize their thoughts and suggest alternatives. The level of involvement that took place in this decision making, stimulated them to assume individual responsibility for achieving specific aspects of their goal. Consequently, some contacted government administrations in search of work opportunities, while others developed communications with teachers and administrators at Mackenzie High School. In a total group effort they devised a questionnaire for other students at Mackenzie so they could determine the need for the work program and the job areas students would be interested in. Throughout the implementation of their strategy, the group learned to feel more comfortable weighing alternatives, analyzing their actions, and generating ideas for dealing with problems in the future. With their new skills in dealing with these processes the group was able to gain favorable support from government administrators, teachers, and citizens for a work-opportunity program at their high school.

The staff was extremely pleased with the group dynamic that was developed.

X. Overall Recommendations

Our experiences indicate that the process involved in the environmental education demonstration program are basically sound both theoretically and in practice. We feel that to provide the maximum opportunity for youth to participate in this alternative learning setting, it should be offered in the public schools. Limitations on class size, meeting after school hours, and the lack of school credit were major disadvantages to maximizing participation in the alternative school. These constraints could be overcome by having the program integrated into the public school system. At the same time, however, the constraints of operating in the complex politics of public schools must be reconciled.

We recognize that alternative school offered the only community problem solving class in the entire school experience of the participants. Their self-concept and political efficacy was strengthened as a result of the program. We are not certain whether the participants will be highly involved in community problem solving as adults. Developing the environmental awareness and learning political skills requires much more involvement than a one year course. It requires continuous exposure and involvement in school from kindergarten through the 12th grade. We strongly urge that school systems consider environmental awareness and problem solving as an integral part of the school program.

XI. The Program Future

Both the program staff and some regional school were quite interested in incorporating the program on a pilot basis. Although we wanted local funding

we weren't successful at getting it. Nonetheless the seeds for some change were planted with the proposal that was written and offered to the community and its schools. Our failure, however, certainly doesn't exclude the possibility that a similar program couldn't be implemented there or in another area when funding was available.

XII. Initial Guidelines

In an effort to detail the elements of our alternative school program and how they might be successfully integrated in an open classroom in any school, we've developed these initial guidelines. Although the specific circumstances of our alternative school can't be duplicated, we do feel that some of what we learned might serve as a guide to others interested in establishing this kind of learning setting within or outside the traditional school.

These initial guidelines were gleaned from our experiences and the responses of the participants. The education team feels that the unique contribution of the guidelines is the emphasis on personnel, resources, and organization of problem solving dynamic.

II

Suggested Guidelines for Consideration In Developing Urban Alternative Schools or Open Classrooms

Suggested Guidelines for Consideration in Developing Urban Alternative Schools or Open Classrooms

Introduction

These guidelines have been written for both alternative schools and for open classroom. Where there might be differences in application, we have tried to note those differences.

1. Basic Organizational Information

Meeting Time - There is a need for at least a 2-3 hour block of time to cover community trips, spontaneous activities, and "playtime". Whatever the meeting time be sure participants can be home before dark. School - The last class of the day. Community - Right after school worked out well since many participants ran errands, worked, or went shopping on the weekends. Both Saturday and evening meetings have the disadvantage that most resource offices are closed.

Frequency of Meetings -

1. Twice weekly sessions worked well since it allowed for good continuity from session to session but it wasn't so often that the program took all of their extra-curricular time.
2. Plan on time off for school vacations and added sessions when necessary for planning and presenting proposals to groups.

Group Size - With our program structure having 3 project groups, each with a resource person, a total of 20 participants was an appropriate

size with which to work. More participants could probably be handled with the same or fewer staff if the participants have done some community work and can act more independently.

Provisions for Community Trips - It's extremely important that participants feel they have the freedom to go where they have to in order to gain awareness of their environment and to obtain needed resources. A permission slip signed by parents and reviewed by the school principal should be issued to cover all the program activities, except for overnight trips. Parents should provide a note for overnight trips.

Group Age - Youth high school age and up are probably best suited for this problem solving orientation for several reasons:

1. They have acquired some of the skills and maturity essential to the program success.
2. Intellectually they can synthesize abstract ecological, political, economic, and social concepts to the issues and extrapolate more feasible solutions than younger participants.
3. They're developing a sense of community responsibility they want to test with reality.

Rewards - The bulk of the rewards lies with personal responses from the resource people: their encouragement and trust,

1. Occasionally it's nice to take the class to meet at a park or beach where they can look forward to some combined work and recreation.

2. Credit - School

School - Provision should be made for credit for the course and the work opportunity (see below)

Community - If you can't arrange credit with a school try giving them a certificate of participation to put in their permanent file at school.

II Resources

Meeting Place -Basically you'll need an informally arranged central meeting room with access to other smaller meeting rooms.

Storage Space -Bulletin boards should be available. It does help to have free access to the place in case emergency meetings are called.

School - Be sure the furniture is movable and comfortable.

Community - Some suggested places to look for space include conveniently located churches, youth centers, community houses, or private homes.

Funding Needs -Transportation - You'll need money for field trips.

Work-Study - If the class is taking the course in the afternoon when the participants would otherwise be working, part-time jobs could be made available for the days they are not in class. Although we didn't do this in our program, if we had, we could probably have prevented several participants from dropping out who were interested but really needed the extra money from work. The project group developing the work-opportunity program for Mackenzie High suggested we offer

jobs in community service organizations dealing with relevant community problems. In organizing Mackenzie's program they found agencies like the Housing Commission, Air Pollution Control Commission, Transportation Authority, and Employment Commission quite willing to take students voluntarily to learn about their operation and to do light office work. This program, by the way, also opens important exposure to alternative career opportunities for participants.

Possible sources of funding for such a program include the Labor Department, Neighborhood Youth Corps Programs or Basic Organizational Information.

Rent

School - If you have access to tape recorders, movie and slide projectors, and other media equipment and duplicating facilities you probably won't need to rent any other equipment, except the van for transportation.

Community - Unless your facility has media and duplication equipment you'll probably need to rent it occasionally. You may also have to pay rent for the facility plus your van for transportation.

Insurance

School - School insurance should cover the community travel for staff and students, but since community trips will be fairly regular the staff should check the school policy.

Community - If the van is rented it should also be insured.

Staff using their own cars will have to increase their own coverage or the alternative school can incorporate to reduce the liability on individual staff.

Consultants

Usually professionals will volunteer to consult with student groups, but sometimes they want reimbursement for travel or time. Usually up to $25 a session is acceptable by graduate students.

Permanent Staff

School - One teacher working about half time is needed to coordinate the program and to act as a resource person to the group. (If they also coordinate the work study program, they'll probably need tc spend full time to keep records, visit the agencies, and work out potential problems between the agency and the volunteer. At least two other resource people, student teachers, or graduate students, (paid mostly through college workstudy) are needed.

Community - A half-time director for (full-time if they also coordinate the work-opportunity program) keeping records, visiting agencies, and working out potential problems between volunteer and agencies should coordinate the program. The other two assistants, perhaps a graduate student on work study or a qualified community youth leader, might volunteer as a resource.

Transportation -Total Group

A large "Maxi-wagon" type van is adequate for keeping a small group of about 18 together for initial group community trips. They cost about $15/day or mileage to rent.

Group Projects

For smaller group trips private cars are most economical and convenient unless there's a good mass transit system close-by. Ten cents/mile is standard reimbursement.

Materials and Equipment -

1. A-V equipment like tape recorder, movie projector, and and especially a slide projector and inexpensive cameras should be available. If many slides are taken it might be worth buying a slide projector.
2. Office equipment - Free access to a phone is a must if you're going to work with the community. The coordinator should have a desk and some file space to share with the participants plus office supplies including letterhead (for credibility).
3. Room Equipment - The need for a place to show slides and some kind of book rack or pamphlet holder to display resource material.
4. Information Resources

   Usually there's a lot of resource information available for usage, but it may not be organized. Sometimes the larger social service organizations have a directory of

community resources. Other sources of human and material resources include:

a. University environmental groups and departments.

b. Government Agencies

   1. Model Neighborhood Programs

   2. Community Renewal Programs

   3. Traditional City/County/ and State agencies.

      Obtain an organizational chart of city government.

c. Citizen's Action Groups

d. Labor Unions-community action and environmental action committees

e. Chamber of Commerce

f. Individual Industries

g. Municipal Library (city/county main office)

h. Periodicals--"City", "Parks and Recreation", "Environment", "Environmental Quality magazines", or neighborhood newspapers.

i. Current paperbacks-university faculty usually keep fairly up-to-date bibliographies.

Personnel - Since a great deal of the program depends on the relationship the staff and participants develop, selecting the right personnel is critical. Some important characteristics to look for, are an individual who can:

1. Provide an adult model of promptness, reliability, and maturity;

2. Open doors and help give the participants credibility for project activities;
3. Provide encouragement and continuous support;
4. Help youth find resource material and speakers;
5. Be flexible in response to the participants' needs;
6. Help participants evolve leadership roles in the total group and in the smaller project groups;
7. Establish and maintain direct communications with parents;
8. Help plan project strategies by suggesting alternative directions and insure continuity in the resource role;
9. Mirror program goals, objectives, and processes.

Some additional criteria for selection are:

1. A high level of commitment to youth and to dealing with community issues. Past experiences in working successfully with youth and community action programs.
2. A flexible schedule where staff should be able to meet with the participants on an occasional weekend or evening.
3. Very reliable - the participants should be able to reach staff at home or at least leave a message that will get a response.
4. Sex, age, color - These factors didn't make much difference to our group. They were more interested in how the resource person responded to them. It seems as though a mix of these characteristics is helpful.

5. Awareness of community resources. The resource people should have a good knowledge of where to go for information, support, and resource people, and how these resources can best be used to solve problems.
6. Community residence - If the program is working in a minority community, unquestionably a part of the staff should be a resident of that community and preferably it should be the coordinator. This is not only important because the program is more credible to the community, but it also insures that the values and feelings of that community are an integral part of the program planning. Non-residents or members of another ethnic probably do not have the community perspective that is needed.
7. Consultants - should also possess the above characteristics as much as possible.

XIII. Communications

Communications with the Political Community -Liberal politicians and educators recognize the need for the type of program advocated here. They see the need for people to get themselves together to affect change in government. Probably they'll be very supportive of the program and help the group obtain funding. We found, in return, they were very appreciative of occasional bulletins on the program's progress.

Communications to parents and educators -It is imperative to get to know the parents of the participants personally and directly. A visit to the home early in the program usually relaxes parents about their child becoming involved in a special program where they're taking a lot of community trips. Sometimes letters sent to the homes are not read. An early visit to the home is a good time to answer questions about the program and the people in it. You should maintain communication through newsletters, occasional meetings, and by calling the parents on several occasions.

Communications within the group -1. The project groups should have as much time as possible to work among themselves. This should help develop a group dynamic and evolve leadership roles.

2. Project groups and individuals should have opportunities to show slides they've taken, or resource speakers and information they've learned with their parents and peers.

3. The participants should also have time to relate to the staff and each other at a more social level.

XIV. Overall Program Organization

Community Orientation - It is likely that participants will realize there are environmental problems, but they haven't really focussed on any in their own community. It is important then that the first few months be spent defining the environment and resource people by way of community trips, camera encounters, and newspaper

articles. This orientation can serve to better understand the ecological, economic, social, and political aspects of the issues in the community. The final months should be spent on helping to solve a specific problem.

XV. Selecting Projects

One of the major reasons for involving youth in with projects in their own community is to expose them to a problem solving process and to encourage them to remain involved as a future citizen. Their initial involvement should then be as positive an experience as possible. These criteria appear to be essential to that type of experience:

1. The participants are intimately involved in deciding the subject they will work with (housing, unemployment, transportation, etc.) and the particular aspect of the topic they wish to study.
2. The role of the resource people is to ask the participants to analyze their choice by asking questions such as:
    a. Is the project too complex?
    b. Is there enough time to complete it?
    c. Do we have enough human and material resources to help us?
3. Projects should be action-oriented rather than a research exercise resulting in a written report.
4. Start with a project that is of the proper scale.
5. The projects should be started as soon as possible because they do grow in complexity. Resource people can encourage an earlier start by asking what interests the participants have and helping to follow up their ideas with interesting resource material.

6. Projects should be in the immediate community since it's more convenient, easier to gain support, and it affects the participants more personally.
7. When the participants are making decisions on issues they want to work with, let their perceptions of the environment determine what's important to them. In other words let them use their priorities. Likely, the priorities will vary greatly with the community, race and ethnic make-up groups. By the way, their reasons for becoming involved with a particular project group may not always be based upon academic considerations.

XVI. The Problem Solving Process

When the group has decided on the specific aspect of a problem they want to help solve these six steps provide an important overall framework for guidance through a problem:

1. Defining the problem-discuss with the group their perception of the problem and develop a statement of their position.
2. Become informed about the problem or issue - the groups should search information defending their position and a variety of others affected by the problem as well. This is an essential step to understanding the issue holistically. Deleting the opposition view point may steal your thunder in solving the problem later on. The group should then consider the ecological, economic, political, and social implications of their problem and its alternative solutions. Consult with periodicals, resource people, and other literature for the information. Once you gather this information you'll need to critically analyze it when considering alternative solutions.

3. Stating alternative solutions - Each possible way to dealing with the problem should be discussed and analyzed for its feasibility given the totality of the problem. Likely this step will give rise to conflict so it could be a point at which to clarify values.
4. Develop a Plan of Action - The strategy for acting should have a clear statement of the alternative to dealing with the problem. The groups should try to anticipate who will benefit and who will be threatened by their actions. They should develop a strategy for dealing with the "losers." It also helps to have a plan in reserve, should one fail.
5. In taking Action on the Plan - List what has to be done and set some sort of timetable for doing it. This provides the opportunity for participants to check off their progress and to know their responsibilities.
6. Evaluating the Strategy - To avoid making the same mistakes throughout the process, a continual evaluation is needed. When the program is completed, look back at what you did and examine how you might have done it differently.

XVII. Evaluation

The emphasis of the program is on processes not so much on content. Your evaluation scheme should reflect this emphasis. Try to measure attitude and behavioral change. You can determine the degree of factual understanding from discussions throughout the problem solving process. It is useful to evaluate attitudes and behaviors with a written pre-test and post-test accompanied with some unobtrusive measures.

Written Evaluations

The pre-test/post-test materials should focus on at least eight parameters: political efficacy; political trust; critical thinking; problem solving skills; cognitive domain; affective domain; values; and self concept.

Student Profile - Part of an initial registrationaire should include questions on the backgroumd of the participant, including previous political activity, their interests, and reason for being involved in the program.

Final Self-Evaluation - Provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on what they've done and how they feel about it. The self-analysis is a good tool for asking specific questions to help evaluate the program.

Unobtrusive Evaluation

This type of evaluation is mostly taken from observations of actual behavior of change by the participants. This should be a very important aspect of an evaluative program.

III

The Evaluative Process

The Evaluation Process

Of all the processes developed in this program, that of evaluation was the most difficult. Since our primary emphasis was to develop attitudes reflected in actual behavior. We could really only measure our impact very crudely, since measured attitudes do not necessarily reflect actual behavior and unobtrusive measures of behavior are generally subjective, unquantifiable, and may reflect only part of the attitude complex.

In our strategy for evaluation we sought to blend techniques for assessing both attitudes and behaviors. Thus, we developed a written pre-test instrument to measure attitudes and a set of unobtrusive methods for assessing behavioral change. The written evaluation basically measured for the participant's level of political efficacy,[1)] political trust,[2)] critical thinking skills,[3)] and cognitive mapping.[4)] The students also provided information regarding their previous political activity (Appendix).

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[1] Political efficacy - the degree of real confidence an individual has in his ability to influence change in his environment.

[2] Political trust - the degree of confidence an individual has in the political system and political officials to effect change on his behalf.

[3] Critical thinking skills (Berg, 1965) include the ability to:
1. Identify central issues;
2. Recognize underlying assumptions;
3. Evaluate evidence or authority
   a. Recognize bias and emotional factors;
   b. Recognize stereotypes and cliches;
   c. Distinguish between verifiable and unverifiable data;
   d. Distinguish between the essential and the incidental;
   e. Distinguish between the relevant and non-relevant;
   f. Determine whether facts support a generalization.
4. Draw warranted conclusions.

[4] Cognitive mapping - the mental picture an individual has of the physical location of streets, buildings, and other features of a community.

Results of the Pre-Test

Results from the written pre-tests indicate that most of the participants had some confidence as individuals, and more so in groups, in having an impact on changing their environment, however, most all expressed little faith in government to respond to legitimate complaints except under organized pressure. A few who had been involved in sit-ins, boycotts, or other political activities in Detroit seemed to have a better mental map of the city for those experiences. We considered a cognitive map better when the participants drew "their community" including Detroit's streets and landmarks in total, rather than just their neighborhood. Essentially, the participants saw themselves as political efficacious and trusting government to some extent while representing a fairly good cross section in their mental mapping of Detroit. Very few, however, responded well to the critical thinking or problem solving skills test.

The major unobtrusive evaluation was based on our observations recorded in a daily log noting the participants responses to: a) accepting responsibilities, b) initiating activities, c) and communicating with administrators.

Our observations early in the program appear to correlate poorly with the data from the written pre-test. Most participants expressed relatively high efficacy in the pre-test while only a few of those actually behaved that way. It was the few with histories of high involvement in a school or community activities who readily initiated and assumed responsibilities for contacting adult resources. Most of the participants were, however, quite responsive about working in small groups and assumed responsibility for reporting results of discussions to the rest of the group.

Interpreting the apparent inconsistency between the written evaluation and actual behavior would certainly be a matter of conjecture. Perhaps it can be explained by seeing these youth as wanting very much to believe they could make an impact on the quality of their environment yet recognizing in real situations they hadn't been prepared to do that.

In any case, this situation appears to demonstrate the limitations of an attitude instrument, and holds strong implications for using actual behavior as a reflection of some attitudes.

The written pretest, however, accurately reflected their feelings of mistrust in government to respond to community needs. Most of the group truly behaved as though they had little faith in government to help them solve problems.

Conclusions From The Post-test Evaluation

Our post-test evaluation included our accumulated observations, feedback from group discussions throughout the year, and the written pretest evaluation. Because of the inconsistent results from the written pre-test, we relied more heavily on unobtrusive assessments of growth. Based on this information we have arrived at the following conclusions concerning the effect of our program:

1. In providing positive real life experiences with relevant environmental problems, we have improved the self-concept of some of the youth so they can more easily communicate with administrators and seriously consider becoming involved in constructive community action in the future.

2. As the resource people and the adults, the staff felt we had "reached" many of the youth at a real feeling level in their environment, which was otherwise filled with adults threatening their freedom and smothering them with preconceived notions of how they should act. This relationship formed an important foundation for creating mutual trust.
3. Although we grant these youth are not all knowing about their environment, we feel, because of our learning process approach they are now:
   a. more aware of the issues involved in each of their project areas--housing, youth unemployment, and recreation.
   b. more aware of Detroit's environmental shortcomings, and also informed of alternatives to transportation, housing, youth unemployment, and recreation problems.
   c. more sensitive to their environment having seen their city and Toronto, Canada, as well.
   d. more able to see their "community" as a city rather than only as a neighborhood or a block.

Spceifically let us go back to the first conclusion. Consider youth like George Garner and Elaine Ware who came into the program quiet and very hesitant to even call a city official to ask if they might be interested in supporting a work-opportunity program. By the end of the project they had taken their first and second steps toward communicating with administrators by calling them and writing their first letter to City Hall. Staff encouragement and most of all, the positive response of understanding administrators increased the self-confidence and self-concepts of these youth, making the

next call that much easier. Deborah Moore could serve as another example. She was always really quite chatty with her peers and shy with adults. Through her project she had to address a group of school-community leaders. Deborah realized she "could really do it and not be too nervous". It was this type of positive real life process experience to which we tried to expose the participants in an effort to generate increased self-confidence.

The second conclusion was that we reached the participants, mostly because they reached us first. They needed encouragement, to be trusted and respected for their judgment and ideas. We tried to respond to that need by articulating alternative choices and then allowing them to make the final choice. I think Sheila Spears' feelings expressed precisely what we hoped for in trying to be responsive to them. She said, "It was just nice to know someone really listened to you, valued your ideas, and then actually acted on them."

Our third conclusion concerning the new environmental awareness of the participants is based on our success at bridging the age gap, providing needed resources and learning opportunities, and creating the type of setting where the participants could learn without all the pressure and competition of school. Because there weren't any formalized lectures, the learning took place through exposure to the problems in their community using their senses -- seeing, smelling, and hearing. This kind of learning is difficult to articulate in facts and figures from exams, but more importantly, we feel it touched their sensitivities to the point where their awareness of the environment was obvious from their slides of poor recreation facilities, blighted housing projects, the canyons carved for commuter expressways, and polluted air. On their

trip to Toronto they commented about the beauty of some buildings, the landscaping, the transportations system, and the cleanliness of that city as compared to Detroit. In our discussion with the Toronto Transit Authority, they raised very basic questions concerning the impact of a comprehensive mass transit system on a city. They asked, "Who would be employed to build it?", "Whose jobs would be eliminated?", "How would those wishing to drive be accommodated?", and "Would it be convenient and economical?" Their awareness, concern and motivation to solve environmental problems was again demonstrated by four of the participants who volunteered to serve on a panel discussion on the need for environmental education and the feasibility of youth becoming involved in problem solving (Video tape enclosed). The others on the panel included teachers, a school superintendent, a representative from the Toledo Chamber of Commerce, and youth from Ann Arbor schools. Here the participants expressed a great deal of concern for environmental problems in the inner city and the pathetic irrelevant curriculum in schools. They expressed a desire to see environmental education implemented in schools to provide a more relevant education dealing with the priorities of urban residents. They were, of course, quite supportive of youth being involved in making decisions on problems in the community, clearly recognizing the need for action both as a learning tool and a solution to the problems.

The long term impact of this kind of learning can't be regurgitated on an examination. Rather it could surface in the future in the form of making important decisions about courses to take in school, professional choices (at least one participant does plan to major in environmental communications), and actions to take in their community. Indeed it may well affect their

decision on the kind of environment they want to spend the rest of their life. These are things for which a relevant education should be preparing youth.

Critique of the Evaluation Techniques

We believe the conclusions previously stated demonstrate a great deal of growth in the participants. We also recognize that our goal of producing a youth with a high degree of problem solving skill was not fully achieved. This goal is not likely to be realized in one voluntary program in high school. None-the-less, how closely we can determine our affect in achieving some change is contingent on the accuracy of our evaluation technique. Admittedly we are at a crude stage in designing attitudinal and behavioral techniques and we hope our mistakes can contribute to more accurate assessments of these dimensions in the future.

Some of our mistakes were made because we assumed unrealistic skill or knowledge levels. In doing so we designed questions which could not accurately reflect the individual's level of political efficacy for example. One statement on the written pre-test was "If they stopped picking up garbage at our house, I'd call the city and complain until we got some results." Most participants agreed with the statement. This agreement would infer a level of individual efficacy. It might also assume that if this situation actually arose the same person would indeed call the city until they got some results. This would assume some basic skill level required to take this action, i.e., knowledge of who to call, how to introduce themselves, how to describe their problem, and how to ask for assistance. For many of the participants their communication skills were not very sophisticated, frustrating them to the point

where they wouldn't complete the call. Thus, at least in the initial stages of the program, when the particiapnts were dealing with a new active role, attitude and actual behavior did not match. This indicates the instrument was not sensitive enough to reflect the skill level needed to affect the process. To deal with this problem we might have asked at least a few questions about what they would say to an administrator. If they could answer these questions we might have more accurate idea of whether they would actually complete the call.

In the same sense we may have falsely assumed an awareness of environmental quality in Detroit by asking how they would compare the quality of municipal services in their community to other parts of the city. The results of the cognitive mapping exercise demonstrated that they had little knowledge of neighborhoods and the quality of environment in nearby communities, much less those on the other side of the city. Because they really had very little basis for comparison we would seriously consider dropping this type of question on future evaluations.

The section of the written instrument dealing with the problem solving skills produced an incomplete picture of their abilities in this dimension. Although most of the group didn't answer the question, "How would you go about solving this problem?," actual behavior demonstrated a clear ability of some to abstract parts of the problem solving process. They recognized, for example, the need to first gather information about a problem. Once they decided on a solution they knew they needed outside support for implementing a strategy, and they could suggest logical techniques for gathering that support.

We found similar results with the assessment of critical thinking skills. Although they were unable to identify a biased argument in the evaluation, for instance, throughout the program many were able to readily recognize conflicting information, illogical arguements, and the rational justification for their project strategy.

These results seem to indicate the participants may indeed have some of the skills in program solving and critical thinking but they have not conceptualized their skills in terms of "the problem solving process". Perhaps they may have better demonstrated these skills verbally if we would have played a game or discussed their strategy for solving a specific problem given certain information requiring their analysis.

Conclusions on the Evaluation Process

To briefly recall our evaluation procedure, we used the written pre-test and post-test technique to assess political efficacy, political trust cognitive mapping, critical thinking skills, and problem solving skills. Discussions and observations were used to evaluate behaviors like initiating activities, accepting responsibilities, and communicating to administrators.

We remain confident that these dimensions are quite appropriate as essential elements for assessing a politically skilled citizen. Of particular value in the evaluation process were the unobtrusive assessments as they provided important feedback for determining the validity of our written instrument. We learned two major lessons from this "reality testing": 1) that the written pre-test and post-test was not sensitive enough to accurately assess political efficacy, and 2) that the techniques for evaluating

problem solving an critical thinking skill if changed from a strictly written form to an unobtrusive game or discussion approach might provide more in depth reading of their abilities in these skill areas.

Recommendation for Evaluation:

1. Develop techniques that provide accurate baseline data for assessing future growth.
2. Consider the history of the group before developing the evaluation techniques so as to accurately assume realistic base levels of knowledge and skills.
3. Develop a variety of techniques including written instrument and a heavy emphasis on unobtrusive approaches like observations, games, and discussions.
4. Provide the participants with opportunities to evaluate the program throughout its duration as well as at its conclusion.

IV

Appendices

Appendix A

Definition of Environment

Our Definition of The Environment

The environment includes everything surrounding you. Generally, it's a system of forces that knowingly or unknowingly affects you. Specifically, it includes a range of social and biological problems like:

- recreation
- open spaces
- dirt
- solid wastes
- overcrowding
- building codes
- unemployment
- transportation
- class differences
- crime
- drugs
- housing
- pollution
- the consumer and the market place

Appendix B

Evaluative Instrument

Cognitive Mapping

October 26, 1971

The purpose of this survey is to get to know you better. This is not a test, so feel free to say how you think and feel. Shortly you will have a chance to do the same thing for us.

I. Take the rest of this page and draw a rough map of the city of Detroit. On this map: 1) indicate your neighborhood; 2) other neighborhoods you know well either because you have lived there or visited there; 3) and then indicate those parts of the city which you feel suffer from the worst problems. In the last case, show the area and note what the problems are.

II. How satisfied are you with the services the city provides for your neighborhood?

	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	dis-satisfied	very dis-satisfied	no opinion
a) Sports and recreation facilities for teenagers	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
b) Police protection	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
c) Garbage collection	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
d) Schools	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
e) Buses	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

III. How would you compare the quality of services your neighborhood gets with those in other parts of the city?

much better	better	the same	poorer	much poorer	no opinion
( )	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

IV. Suppose your family is renting an apartment in a housing project from a landlord who doesn't live in the neighborhood. You and your family notice that many of the electrical sockets don't work, sometimes the toilet leaks, and in the winter the heater may stop working on cold days.
Your family decided these problems should be taken care of by the landlord. You and your dad keep calling the landlord, but after a few months he still hasn't shown. You've talked with the neighbors and many of them complain about the same problems. Knowing the Housing Commission might be able to help you, what would you do in such a situation.

___ a) nothing, because it's not worth the trouble
___ b) write a letter to the Commission
___ c) call the Commission
___ d) talk with the Commission in person
___ e) organize the neighbors in the project who have complaints

V. Have you ever done any of the following?

Check if "yes)	describe
( ) a. written a letter of complaint?	_____
( ) b. written a second letter if there was no answer to the first letter	_____
( ) c. called in a complaint	_____
( ) d. talked in person to someone about a complaint	_____
( ) e. circulated a petition	_____
( ) f. hasseled an agency or organization	_____
( ) g. filed suit against someone	_____
( ) h. picketed someplace	_____
( ) i. boycotted something	_____
( ) j. participated in a sit-in	_____
( ) k. damaged property because of a complaint	_____
( ) l. negotiated in an agreement	_____

VI. How do you feel about the following statements?

	agree	disagree	no opinion
There's no use complaining about things like air pollution because complaining won't get you anywhere.	( )	( )	( )
If the air around my house smelled bad because of some nearby factory, I'd move if I could.	( )	( )	( )
If they stopped picking up garbage at our house, I'd call the city and complain until we got some results.	( )	( )	( )
There just doesn't seem to be anything a citizen can do about changing government.	( )	( )	( )
If people get organized they can influence city government.	( )	( )	( )

VII. You and other people in your neighborhood are concerned about the general lack of city services for your neighborhood. You've complained about street lighting, police protection, and vacant buildings. Despite your complaints, little has been done. If you and the rest of your neighbors wrote your district representative in Lansing do you think he would respond to your requests?

yes_____ no_____ no opinion_____

VIII. You're concerned about a busy intersection in your neighborhood since several times you've almost been hit by a speeding car. You think probably a stop sign or signal light would make it a safer crossing. You know that others in the neighborhood are also concerned about the crossing particularly since a child in the neighborhood was hit by a car crossing the street there.

I. How do you think a city official would respond to you if you complained to them about this problem?

II. How do you think city officials would respond to a complaint field by you and many other concerned neighbors?

IX. Your neighborhood has always been a fairly clean place to live. Lately though, you've noticed that one of your neighbors has been accidently spilling his garbage in the alley behind his house. Some of the papers are blowing onto your property and the stuff is beginning to attract rats and roaches. You and the rest of your family have tried to talk with him about the problem, but it doesn't seem to do much good. Besides, he gets more angry about it every time you talk with him. In this case, what would you do?

a) forget about it and hope he stops
b) go over to his house and talk with him again
c) call him and talk to him calmly
d) hassle him with phone calls or otherwise
e) organize the neighbors to put pressure on him
f) report him to the police
g) break a couple of his windows

You have just bought your first home. Being a hard worker, you are only able to see the house on the evenings and weekends, but what you saw really impressed you. The house was freshly painted and had nice shrubbery, in fact, it was the best looking house in that block.

Taking a day off from your work, you arrive early on Monday morning with your Hertz-Rent-a-Truck to move in all your furniture. Arriving at your new home, you see that at the end of the street there is a large reddish-orange cloud of smoke blowing your way. Apparently this factory only operates on week days, and since you only saw the place when the plant wasn't going, and the real estate man didn't say anything about the smoke, you had no idea that this existed. Looking around you, you notice that the paint on the other homes is not white, but a yellowish-red and it is blistering. You also notice that your shrubs are the only ones in the neighborhood that are very healthy. This is probably due to them being freshly planted, as you notice the freshly dug earth around them.

You really liked this house when you saw it, and now you invested all your hard-earned money to buy it, but this obnoxious smoke wasn't planned. If this was you, how would you go about solving the problem?

The policy of the city of Detroit is to collect garbage from each home once a week. This schedule has been adhered to in most parts of the city. If garbage was not being picked up weekly in your neighborhood and this has contributed to rats and unpleasant odors, who would you contact?_____ _____(If the person you would contact is on the "Organizational Chart of the city of Detroit," please circle the contact on the enclosed Organizational Chart.)

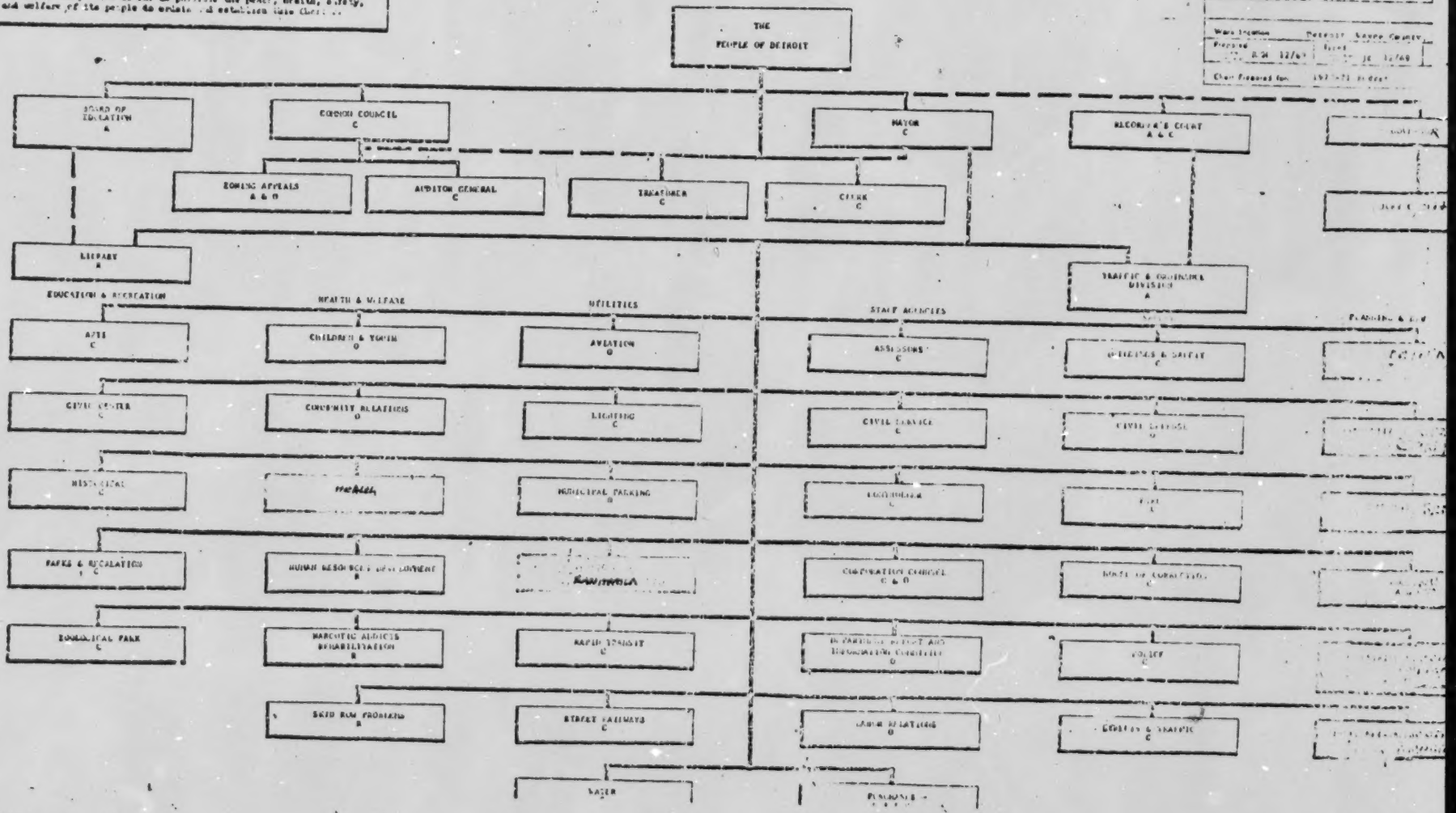
If the person you first contacted didn't provide you with a satisfactory answer, who would you then contact?_____ (If the person you would contact is on the "Organizational Chart of the city of Detroit," please underline the contact on the enclosed Organizational Chart.)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

City Charter, Preamble

We, the people of the City of Detroit, desiring to perfect a municipal government which shall more nearly conform to prevailing conditions and meet the growing needs of our city, insure a more efficient system for the administration of its affairs, secure the fullest measure of self-government conferred by the constitution and laws of the State of Michigan, ... promote as far as possible the peace, health, safety, and welfare of its people do ordain and establish this Char...

CITY OF DETROIT



Critical Thinking

The film was a story of a community in the southwest were violently opposed to the Atomic Energy Commission siting a nuclear plant in that community. A representative of the AEC then came into town and convinced the community that the plant wasn't for building bombs. It was for making radioactive material for medical research and nuclear power. Arguments on both sides were highly emotional, non factual, and at points illogical.

Produced By The AEC

1952

Critical Thinking

FILM QUESTIONNAIRE

Name_____

We'd like to ask you a few questions about this film. Please answer them as completely as possible. This is not a test, we're not grading you.

Put yourself in the position of a city councilman in this movie. If there were another council meeting how would you vote on the plant? Please describe why you would vote that way.

Consider in your answer:

1. If there were any questions you feel were not answered in the film.

2. What were the basic assumptions made about the value of the plant.

3. Were the assumptions correct?

How would you describe the arguments for the plant?

Were the AEC's arguments leading to logical conclusions? Why?

How would you describe the arguments against the plant?

Were they leading to logical conclusions? Why?

Your Groups Employment_____

Housing_____

Final Evaluation

Recreation_____

Class Differences_____

Some Sample Questions that will provide Information that could be used to formulate tentative Guidlines for Consideration by Para schools in Other Communities, based upon our Detroit experience.

1. Who should play the major role in project selection?
   a. Students
   b. Resource person
   c. Resource person interaction
   d. other

   Comment_____

   _____

2. The first three months of the class should focus on:
   a. orientation to the community environment
   b. content information (ecological, political, social, etc.)
   c. action projects
   d. other

   Comment_____

   _____

3. What should be the duration of a typical project?
   a. project should be completed in 3 months
   b. project should be completed in 6 months
   c. project should be completed in 9 months
   d. other

   Comment_____

   _____

4. What should be the major role of the resource person
   a. bring in information
   b. leader
   c. teacher
   d. other

   Comment_____

   _____

5. It is important that all staff members stay with the project from start to finish:
   a. Strongly agree
   b. agree
   c. neutral
   d. disagree
   e. strongly disagree
   f. undecided

   Comment_____

   _____

6. The ideal location for meetings would be:
   a. neighborhood school
   b. neighborhood church
   c. neighborhood youth center
   d. other

   Comment_____

   _____

7. The ideal size of a para school class would be:
   a. 1-10 d. 31-40
   b. 11-20 e. 41-50
   c. 21-30 f. other

   Comment_____

   _____

8. The ideal size of a group for carrying out a project would be:
   a. 1-2 d. 7-8
   b. 3-4 e. 41-50
   c. 5-6 f. other

   Comment_____

   _____

9. Funding for travel expenses to and from meetings is important:
   a. strongly agree
   b. agree
   c. undecided
   d. disagree
   e. strongly disagree

   Comment_____

   _____

10. It would be helpful to have a bus assigned to the program:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

11. Outstanding resource persons should be used extensively in the program:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

12. Meetings should be held:
    a. daily
    b. twice a week
    c. once a week
    d. twice a month
    e. other

    Comment_____

    _____

13. If the group is studying several problems at the same time, it is important that each groups has its own resource person:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

14. In a program of this nature, how much emphasis should be placed on the following:

	High Emphasis	Moderate Emphasis	Low Emphasis
a. ecological background			
b. political background			
c. economic background			
d. technical background			
e. social background			
f. strategies for bringing about change			

15. Transportation should be provided for all field trips:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

16. The first phase of the course should expose students to the local environment (bus tours, slides, presentations, etc.):
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

17. The program should emphasize action projects:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

18. Students should play a major role in selecting projects:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

19. The resource person should play a major role in helping to design projects:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

20. Parents of participants should be oriented to the program:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

21. A major factor of the course should be on the political structure of the community:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

22. A program of this nature should <u>not</u> be held in a local school:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

23. How much work should a student be expected to do outside of class?
    a. 1-2 hrs./wk
    b. 3-4 hrs./wk
    c. 5-6 hrs./wk
    d. other _____

    Comment_____

    _____

24. In carrying out action projects, the class should involve the local community in the planning process:
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

25. The resource people of the project should live in the community in which the students live.
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

26. The director of the project working directly with the students should be male.
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment _____

    _____

27. If all the students in the course are black, the staff should be:
    a. all black
    b. mostly black.
    c. makes no difference

    Comment_____

    _____

28. It is important to have the opportunity to visit communities other than the one the student lives in.
    a. strongly agree
    b. agree
    c. undecided
    d. disagree
    e. strongly disagree

    Comment_____

    _____

29. The best meeting time for the program is:
    a. right after school
    b. week day nights
    c. Saturday mornings
    d. Saturday afternoons
    e. Sunday afternoons
    f. Sunday evenings

30. What should the relationship be between the program and the school the students attend?

    _____

    _____

31. Would you have put more time into the projects if it were part of a work-study paying program paying minimum wage?
    a. yes
    b. no
    c. uncertain

    Comment_____

    _____

32. You are more interested in trying to work toward solutions to problems oriented about air, water, and waste pollution than more social problems like housing, unemployment, and police community relations?
    a. yes
    b. no
    c. uncertain

    Comment_____

    _____

33. How satisfied are you with the way the community (residents, officials, administrators) received your:

	very satisfied	satisfied	undecided	unsatisfied	very unsatisfied
a. services:					
b. ideas					

Your Group Recreation_____

Housing_____

Unemployment_____

None_____

Some Questions to Help Evaluate the Detroit Paraschool

1. Do you feel we gave you the proper orientation to get your projects started?

   Comment_____

   _____

2. How well do you feel we responded to your needs, concerns, ideas?

   Comment_____

   _____

3. Responsibilities were shared by students and staff?
   a. strongly agree
   b. agree
   c. undecided
   d. disagree
   e. strongly disagree

   Comment_____

   _____

4. Do you feel you will become more involved in community activities as a result of this project?
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. uncertain

   Comment_____

   _____

5. Do you feel guidance was shared equally among staff?
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. explain

   Comment_____

   _____

6. Once projects were chosen, do you think you had enough time to complete them?
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. uncertain

   Comment_____

   _____

7. Should projects have been started earlier in the program?
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. uncertain

   Comment_____

   _____

8. Do you feel resource people provided you with ample assistance concerning your projects?
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. explain

   Comment_____

   _____

9. How much encouragement did the resource people give you?
   a. too much
   b. right amount
   c. too little

   Comment_____

   _____

10. Was there enough opportunity to discuss your projects with other participants?
   a. too much
   b. right amount
   c. too little

   Comment_____

   _____

11. What influenced you in selecting your project?

   a. friends already in the project
   b. interest in the project
   c. the resource person
   d. other

   Comment_____

   _____

12. How do you feel about communicating with administrators and officials about community issues since you have been in the course?
   a. more confident
   b. no change
   c. less confident

   Comment_____

   _____

13. Looking back, do you feel we made the right decision relating to the projects selected?
Explain_____

Comment_____

14. Do you feel your project was worth the effort?
a. yes
b. no
c. uncertain
What was your project?_____

Comment_____

_____

15. The trip to Toronto made an important contribution to you personally.
a. strongly agree
b. agree
c. undecided
d. disagree
e. strongly disagree

Comment_____

_____

16. What were the three most valuable aspects of the Toronto trip?
a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Comments_____

_____

17. What were the major reasons for students dropping out of the program?
a. job
b. extra curricular activities
c. school and grades
d. not interested
e. parents discouraged them
f. friends discouraged them

Comment_____

_____

18. The project you were involved in made a contribution to the community?
a. yes
b. no
c. uncertain

Comment_____

_____

19. Resource people were not important once the project got started?
    a. yes
    b. no
    c. uncertain

    Comment_____

    _____

20. How helpful were each of these resource people to your progress in the class?

	Very Helpful	Helpful	Undecided	Unhelpful	Very Unhelpful
a. Mrs. Barbara Gorden Michigan Employment Security Commission	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Jim Swan Bus trip to Rouge	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Bill Stapp	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Tom Benjamin	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Tim Speyer Recreation Planning	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Mack Hogans	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Artie Franklin	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Leon Wyten	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Bob Cares	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. It would have been hel ful for us to meet other youth doing the same kind of thing as you in this course.

Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree

Appendix C

Sample Communication to the Community

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources Building
430 East University St.
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

November 18, 1971

Dear

Enclosed is a summary of some of the activities your child has been involved with in the urban problems course called "Confronting Community Problems". We'd appreciate it if you would review it and jot down any questions or comments you have about it or any other activities in the course.

Although you are most welcome to come to the class at any time, the staff feels you might want to meet as a group to discuss where the class has been thus far and what you feel could be changed in the future. We've planned to meet with you Thursday, December 2. For your convenience the staff will hold two meetings; one for those who can attend in the afternoon and one for those who wish to come in the evening.

Meeting schedule:

Afternoon Meeting	12:30-2:00
or	
Evening Meeting	7:30-9:00

You are of course quite welcome to participate in the class activities that day as well. Please feel free to bring other parents or interested citizens with you.

The meetings will be held at:

The Northwestern Christian Church
13560 Ilene
(Two blocks west of Wyoming off Schoolcraft)

We look forward to meeting with you then.

Kind Regards,

Roslyn Glasser
Project Assistant

RG:jg

Since the class called "Confronting Community Problems" began meeting in late September we've drawn students from a variety of schools including Imaculata, Mackenzie, and Redford high schools and the 12th Street Academy.

During the first few weeks of class we talked about several community problems such as litter, housing, air pollution, and recreation. At the same time the class planned a trip to look at areas in the city demonstrating these problems. They decided to go to River Rouge, the Jeffries Project, the 12th Street area, and Palmer Park. Although we weren't able to complete the trip as planned, in River Rouge and in the Jeffries Project, the students tested the community surveys they developed for the trip.

Throughout October and thus far in November what has been most exciting for the staff to observe is the beginning of a real sense of freedom being demonstrated by the students. They have shown a high degree of maturity and creativity in the decisions they've made both in planning specific activities like fieldtrips as well as in designing the course content. Briefly they've decided to focus on at least three important problem areas; unemployment, class differences, and recreation.

In the first unit on unemployment, now under way, we've talked with representatives from the Michigan Employment Security Commission for orientation to the problem and some of its alternative solutions. As a result of this discussion we've taken a trip to the MacNamara Skills Center to see if this program to provide training for disadvantaged youth was a good alternative solution to unemployment. Currently the class is searching for other employment programs as well. In talking with a representative from the Manpower Training Institute they've discovered that opportunities also exist for youth who may not be disadvantaged and also those who are college bound. It's hoped that these resource people and activities can provide a broad variety of employment options on which they can take action for themselves, their fellow youth, or the community in general.

In the next few months we're looking forward to a few interest groups forming from the class to work on actual programs for solving the problem. We also look forward to meeting with you on December 2 at either 12:30 or 7:30.

If you wish to contact me before then, deliver a message through your child, write a note to me at the School of Natural Resources or leave a message at 764-1410 in Ann Arbor. In any case I would be most happy to reply as quickly as possible.

I intend to keep you informed of further activities in the program through these letters.

Kind Regards,

Roslyn Glasser

RG:jg

Appendix D

Sample Correspondence of the Participants

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources Building
430 East University St.
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

13511 Pinehurst
Detroit, Michigan 48238
May 14, 1972

Mr. Jack Ackroyd
Deputy Cheif of Police
590 Jarvis Street
Toronto

Dear Mr. Ackroyd,

I am a member of an Enviromental Group located here in Detroit. We are planning a trip to Toronto June 20-24.

Through Mrs. Sharon Earn we learned of your interest in talking to groups. We would be interested in setting up an interview type talk sometime June 21-23 between 11a.m. and 5 p.m. The size of the group will be twenty five people or less.

We hope to recieve a favorable and early reply sending a date and time for the interview. Thank you very much.

Respectfully yours,
Arthurie L. Edwards
(Ms.) Arthurie L. Edwards

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1046 Natural Resources Building
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
313/764-1404

July 7, 1971

Mr. McGuire
Civil Service Commission
City-County Building
Detroit, Mich.

Dear Mr. McGuire;

I really enjoyed talking with you and getting such cooperation for which we are grateful.

In response to your questions I have written the information that you asked for. The students will work one semester with each placement 2 days a week three hours each day, for a total of six hours per week. Students will be expected to start at 1:00 and work until 4:00. There will be a total of 50 students in this group to be divided into different parts of the city government.

There are the following catagories we've decided students might be interested in:

Health Services	18-20
Parks and Recreation	8
Housing	6
Judicial	5
Journalism	5
Unemployment	5
Pollution Control	4
Transportation Planning	3
Fine Arts (Art Inst)	2

We will try to get money to fund the program, but if we cannot we do not expect the city to supply money for us.

I hope I have answered all your questions. If not please consult your abstract for more information or write me. I will be gladeto help you with any questions you have. Write me at.

5587 Oakman
Detroit, MI 48204

Sincerely yours,
Sheila Spears
Sheila Spears

Appendix E

An Article to be Published on the Project

An Alternative School Approach to Environmental Education

INTRODUCTION:

If we dare to give youth more freedom to practice relating directly to their environment and the problems relevant to their world, we will have unleashed the power of a new generation of adults better able to cope with the environmental issues confronting our world. Making this an educational reality in public school requires the monumental task of redefining the role of schools, staff, and students. The national Environmental Quality Education Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are now providing funds for school systems experimenting with educational programs. Several states are initiating plans to help coordinate and evaluate these experiments. Some innovative school districts and teachers are independently taking action as well. By creating community schools and open classrooms they are developing new ties with the students and their immediate community environment. Through all these efforts, education is slowly taking a more meaningful direction for youth.

THE TRADITION

For the vast majority of youth, however, the self-contained, pre-packaged, and teacher-oriented classroom is the reality of their educational experience. From my own perspective as a former biology teacher with the Detroit Public Schools, I can appreciate the merits of this traditional approach. I could easily transfer information to the students and evaluate how much they remembered. Standard textbooks were the basis of lectures and standard textbooks provided most test questions. I didn't have to make any major decisions on the nature of

the course content. The textbook was extremely helpful in providing organization and course content. Well in advance, my teacher colleagues and I knew what we would be discussing in our classes. Each semester was the same lesson plan so we were confident we could answer most questions raised. Rarely was I required to be resourceful or creative except occasionally to find substitutes for missing pieces of laboratory equipment. As a neophyte teacher in the inner city, this method provided a great deal of security. It was a process that the school administration encourages.

Quandaries of A teacher in Transition

After a few years, however, I saw severe limitations to this teaching method. Most significant was that the majority of my students weren't learning very much and were losing interest in school. They told me they simply weren't interested in the material being presented. Apparently the textbooks were created more for the teacher than for the learner. Could I deny that learning about Lamarckian evolution of the giraffe or the creation of atoll in the Carribean, ... the reproduction of the duckbill platypus of Australia were not relevant to students in Detroit. It was particularly difficult for me to respond affirmatively to the question at a time when more students were turning off and failing each semester.

Growing frustration among my students about the relevancy of the curriculum was matched by my personal anxiety about how to respond positively to their needs.

Beyond the sterile classroom was the real world filled with environmental issues. These issues raised questions about the survival of human life. Concerns like poor sanitation, inadequate health care, and pollution are recognized as environmental problems most severely affecting inner city residents (Hare, 1970). Little or nothing was even said about them in school despite their obvious relevance to the lives of my students. A Biology class was an appropriate place for

dealing with some of these issues. However, one stumbling block after another arose for me that prevented any smooth transition to this alternative course content.

The text we were using had only one chapter related to ecological principals. This chapter was located at the end of the book, which I wasn't scheduled to reach until the last week of class. I was directed by the Science Department to spend the first three months of class on evolution, chapter 1-8. How could I offer both a relevant Biology class and keep my obligation to the department? If I were to focus on sanitation problems how could I best teach this subject? I knew little about sanitation problems. I recognized, however, if we were to really understand the problems, we had to get into the community. We needed to talk with people in the Sanitation and Health Departments. We had to touch base with residents living with poor sanitation services. We needed to find out what methods were available to improve the situation.

If the students were to learn from community involvement, what then was my role as a teacher? Perhaps I should help arrange for transportation except that the free Great Cities bus came once yearly to our school of 3,200 students and would provide a bus tour for only 2 classes. If I could arrange transportation, could I find a block of time to take a trip without interfering with the student's other classes? Then once the information was collected, what would we do with it? Was just knowing about the problem the end of learning? Should we trust students to work on real community problems? Doesn't community problem solving belong in the government class? If so, how could I effectively interrelate our two disciplines?

In sum, these questions raised the issue of the feasibility of exploring community issues in the high school. Implementing fully a course with a community

problem solving orientation required funds, drastic changes in course content, and interdepartmental cooperation. Meeting these demands required a strong commitment on the part of administrators.

Quandaries of Schools in Transition

Public schools have a monopoly on the bulk of formal education. Our society has entrusted them with this task and usually with very little money to fulfill it. I was asking my school to radically alter an educational approach given the multitude of constraints raised in this chapter. Under these circumstances it's understandable that even committed school administrators (principals, and regional and central board members) might hesitate to pursue a different classroom dynamic, much less complete overhaul, without some assurance that it can be done. In an earlier chapter, Dr. Stapp proposed a definitive strategy for integrating environmental education into the school program, K-12. Despite my confidence in this strategy, many administrators may still have hesitations since they have little empirical data on what will actually happen in the classroom and the community when the constraints have been overcome.

Administrators in my school had concerns regarding issues that youth might select to study. Would they be pollution, sanitation, housing, or what? They questioned the political processes that would be used by students to help solve local environmental problems, and the kind of learning that would take place in the class. These were basic but unanswered questions.

The Alternative School

One of the major reasons for creating an alternative school was to find answers to the many questions raised by school administrators that revolve around

an open classroom approach to education. The purpose of the alternative school was to experiment with the open classroom for one year, and then to bring the results to the attention of the Detroit School Board. The alternative school was established in a community church close to several inner city schools.

The Goal of the Alternative School

The major teaching goal of the alternative school was to assist each student to become knowledgeable concerning the community environment and its associated problems, aware and skilled in how to help solve these problems, and motivated to work toward their solution.

To achieve this goal students would need to:

1. Study environmental issues from an ecological, economic, political, social, and technological point of view.
2. Analyze issues to devise plans for affecting change, and to implement strategies for dealing with the problems.
3. Develop a feeling of self concept.

In general, these objectives emphasize processes, like solving problems, analyzing issues, planning and implementing strategies, and developing self-concepts rather than emphasizing content.

The philosophy behind the project appeared sound, but could it be implemented in a truly urban setting where some of the participants would have to take a bus to the alternative school for a non-credit course. Nevertheless, with financial support from the Office of Environmental Education, the education team of one full time teacher and two assistants began implementing the philosophy in the heart of Detroit's inner city.

Evaluation

One of the major purposes of the course was to measure attitudinal and behavioral changes as a result of the course. Thus, an evaluative instrument was developed. The written evaluation was designed to measure political efficacy,[1] political trust,[2] critical thinking skills,[3] and cognitive mapping.[4] The results from these tests and interpretation of the unobtrusive measures provided an indication of the attitudinal and behavioral changes of the participants as a result of the course.

Summarily, the pretest indicated that of the 20 Black participants most had little confidence in themselves to change their environment and little faith in government to meet their needs. The few who had been involved in sit-ins, boycotts, or other political activities in Detroit seemed to express more faith in themselves to achieve change and seemed to have a better cognitive map of the city from those experiences. Essentially, the participants represented a fairly good cross-section on the political efficacy and trust scales. Very few, however, responded well to the critical thinking or problem solving skills test.

The major unobtrusive evaluation was based on our observations recorded in a daily log noting the participants' responses to accepting responsibilities,

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[1] Political efficacy is defined as the degree of real confidence an individual has in his ability to influence change in his environment.

[2] Political trust is the degree of confidence an individual has in the political system and political officials to effect change on his behalf.

[3] Critical thinking skills refers to the ability of identifying central issues, recognizing underlying assumptions, evaluating evidence or authority, and drawing warranted conclusions.

[4] Cognitive mapping is the mental picture an individual has of the physical location of streets, buildings, and other features of a community.

initiating activities, persisting in dealing with problems, and communicating with administrators.

CREATING AWARENESS

The first phase of the course provided an introduction to the scope of urban issues in Detroit. By exposing students to a variety of problems during the first semester, we hoped they would be ready to make a decision as to which issue they would like to study during the second semester. Inexpensive instamatic cameras were used as a technique to determine what problems the students saw in their community as well as what they enjoyed. With each picture they described their perception both verbally and in writing. Then we rambled through the neighborhood around Mack where mixed perceptions surfaced from "pleasant" and "relaxing" for well manicured lawns to "nasty" and "unhealthy" for unkept alleys. Each of their responses was followed by our "Why?". Their response in turn could lead to a discussion of "the problem" of unkept alleys, poor recreation, or unsafe housing.

After a series of these encounters in their local community and several discussions, we came up with a definition of the environment. The definition came to include "everything around you" and focused on what they felt were the most relevant environmental issues; housing, urban transportation, class differences, youth unemployment, and air and water pollution. A series of bus trips were planned to view other sections of Detroit. Trips were taken to the River Rouge industrial complex, to a low income housing area, and the 12th Street riot section. On each trip the students surveyed some of the residents as to their perceptions relating to the local environment.

DEVELOPING A PROBLEM ORIENTATION

With a sense of their own priorities and those of the community at large, the participants in the course felt they should spend a few weeks learning more about community issues to increase their awareness of local problems in order to help guide them in making a decision concerning an issue they wanted to focus on during the second semester.

The issues that students were most interested in were: recreation, class differences, and youth unemployment. By a plurality vote, they chose youth unemployment as the first issue they wanted to explore.

We attempted to define this problem using local unemployment experts, and a series of field trips to visit job training centers. By the time we were part way through this strategy it was apparent that many of the students would rather have studied housing or recreation, causing some of their interest to wane. We were trying to serve one group of youth and not really relating to what was relevant to others. As our overall strategy was to be flexible and relevant, the resource team decided to continue to focus on a variety of issues through community trips. Given enough exposure to their environment, we felt areas of intense interest would evolve naturally. By January four interest groups had emerged; youth unemployment, housing, recreation, and class differences. It was evident that our total group wasn't really interested in air pollution, water pollution, and solid wastes as their most important priorities. The resource team suspected this might be the case but having a basic natural science orientation we had to do one of two things, readjust our thinking then face our next hurdle by making a basic decision on how we defined the environment and what was relevant education or try to redirect their choices to areas like the pollutions where we

had more familiarity. We could only say no to the second alternative for our desire to serve as a resource for information, to keep a flexible approach and a willingness to learn with the participants, led us to flow with their decisions, to begin defining these issues, and to seek projects for each area of concern.

The projects which eventually surfaced included 1) developing a slide presentation on loans and grants available to low income citizens for rehabilitating their homes; 2) developing a work opportunity program for high school youth to gain job experience; and 3) to help the community develop a recreational area on a vacant lot owned by an industrial firm. Given limitations on the participants' time, their existing skills, and the projects' complexity, the resource team felt these projects were quite realistic to attempt.

The Problem Solving Process

Each group approached their issue using the problems solving method. This method emphasized defining the problem, becoming informal, identifying and analyzing alternative solutions, choosing the most rational alternative, designing a plan of action, implementing the plan, then evaluating it. To exemplify the problem solving process we can take a look at the progress of the recreation project. To define the problem we surveyed the community to locate the recreation facilities that existed in both the black and white sections of the community. The group found very inadequate facilities in the black community and only a bit more adequate in the white community. Then they gathered census figures to determine the numbers and ages of the residents. The students talked with residents and concluded that there was a need for a large recreational facility, a need expressed both by the black and white leadership in the community.

The Black community also needed several smaller recreation lots. Land for both choices was available. One large facility or several smaller ones? These were our alternatives going into step two of the problem solving process. In this step we had to analyze these alternatives and decide on the best strategy to reach the final choice. How will the racial tension affect the process of developing a large facility in the white community versus a small one in the Black community? Will we lose forever a chance to use a most unique large piece of land if we don't pursue the larger site? Who might discourage developing a better facility? Why? What could we do to anticipate their consensus? How much time do we have? Do we have the needed resources and support? These were questions we debated until we answered them and made our choice in the third step of the problem process where we also devised what we thought was the best possible strategy for reaching our goal.

Our choice was to create the large community facility. To implement our basic strategy, we sought aid from a few community leaders with whom we were working to obtain permission from the company to use its large piece of land. Then with the help of a local recreation planner, several youth and adults, an initial site plan was devised. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough real community support to develop a true community recreation facility. Though we weren't successful in implementing the plan during the spring, we did stimulate enough interest in the project so that more community planning is slated for the summer.

The other two groups proceeded very well toward their goals. The housing group prepared a slide presentation on loans and grants, available to low income citizens for rehabilitating their homes, and the presentation has been given to several community groups. The administrative details have also been worked out for a work study project at MacKenzie High School.

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

It was also apparent while proceeding through the projects that there was no one subject discipline to describe the activities. It was an integrated approach. As an example, the students in the housing study learned a great deal about code enforcement, the social misery of the poor housing syndrome, the economics of rehabilitation, the politics of improving housing conditions, the art of sensitive communications to residents and community administrators, use of writing skills, and enough information to develop an effective slide presentation on ways residents can obtain money to rehabilitate their homes. Each of the projects had a variety of similar experiences that stimulated feelings and knowledge about the student's own environment.

Finding a Model Urban Environment

Most of the participants had lived in Detroit all their lives. Many had never traveled very much except into the rural South. Certainly none had ever been to another city to study the environment in contrast to Detroit.

Midway through the program we felt we could learn much about Detroit from an extended trip to another city. We needed one with visible signs of a higher quality environment, one that demonstrated soun' alternatives to transportations, solid waste, housing, and rehabilitation problems. Toronto was the city selected as a field trip site.

Such a trip also offered an opportunity for the group to live and work together in a new environment. We felt they could learn something about group cooperation as well.

The group helped plan the trip by making transportation arrangements, and setting up meetings with planners in the Toronto Redevelopment Commission, Transit Authority, and with the Deputy Commission of Police.

At the Redevelopment Commission the students discovered that Toronto had a model metropolitan government organization. It demonstrated the impact of how metropolitan government machinery can affect higher quality urban and regional planning for homes, businesses, and superior municipal services like mass transit and waste disposal systems.

To understand the views of the populace toward the Metropolitan form of Government, the students interviewed the directors of several low income community organizations and spoke to teenagers in the Black community. We found these people generally supportive of the governmental approach. They did however, complain about racism in the city, neglect of lower income people, and the increased opportunities for wealthy to gain political control under this regional governmental system.

Most of our meetings were very informative, but their effectiveness was enhanced by actually riding the mass transit system, and by visiting the ethnic enclaves, the new city hall, the Science Center, and the Ontario Place.

We were immensely impressed by the group's sensitivity to the needs of the rest of the group. We explored the city together, got lost together, and assisted each other in clarifying positions on issues. These activities helped us grow as a social unit -- learning we could help each other and depend more on each other as a group.

In retrospect, the participants felt one of the greatest values of the trip for them was the experience of "rapping with residents in a different environment."

General Conclusion, Overall Recommendations, and Tentative General Guideline

It should be stressed that this program was a case study. However, the education team strongly feels that the results hold important implications for educating urban youth effectively in either an open classroom or an alternative school setting.

These conclusions and tentative guidelines are based upon the candid feelings and responses of the participants, our daily log of observations, and written final evaluations.

General Conclusions

We feel that for those twenty participants that stayed with the program throughout the year, we have succeeded with some of our basic objectives of 1) providing real life experiences with relevant environmental problems, thereby increasing the confidence of at least a few youth to even speak to administrators and seriously consider becoming involved in constructive community action in the future; 2) "reaching" some of these youth at a real "feeling" level in an environment which was otherwise filled with adults threatening their freedom and smothering them with preconceived notions of how they should act; and 3) increased awareness of issues associated with each of their project areas -- housing, unemployment, and recreation. In addition, we strongly feel the students are more sensitive to their environment having studied their own city, as well as Toronto. They're informed of some real alternatives to the transportation, housing, youth unemployment, and recreation problems.

More specifically, let's go back to the first objective. Consider youth like George Carner and Elaine Ware who came into the program quiet and very hesitant to even call a city official to ask if he might be interested in supporting the work-opportunity program. By the end of the project they had taken their first and second steps toward communicating with administrators by calling them and writing their first letter to City Hall.

Take Deborah as another example. She was always chatty with her peers but shy with adults. Through her project she had to address a group of school-community leaders. Deborah realized she "could really do it and not be too nervous." It was this type of positive real life process experience to which we tried to expose the participants and generate increased self-confidence as a result.

The second aspect of the program we felt positive about was our relationship with the participants. We feel we somehow reached them, mostly because they reached us first. They needed encouragement, to be trusted and respected for their judgment and ideas. We tried to respond to that need by articulating alternative choices and then allowing them to make the final choice. I think Sheila Spears' feelings expressed precisely what we hoped for in trying to be responsive to them. She said, "It was just nice to know someone really listened to you, valued your ideas, and then actually acted on them."

It seems as though by bridging the age gap, providing resources, and opening up opportunities, that we had created the type of setting where participants could learn without all the pressure and competition of school. Because there weren't any formalized lectures, the learning took place through exposure to the problems in their community using their senses -- seeing, smelling, and

hearing. This kind of learning is difficult to communicate in facts and figures from exams, but more importantly, we feel it touched their sensitivities to the point where their awareness of the environment generated comments on their trip to Toronto about the beauty of some buildings, the landscaping, the transportaions system, and the cleanliness of that city as compared to Detroit. In Detroit as well, their slides of poor recreation facilities, housing, and buildings reflected an increased concern and awareness.

It's really quite difficult to project the impact of this kind of learning as it can't be regurgitated on an exam. It could surface in their future in the form of making important decisions about courses to take in school, professional choices, actions to take in their community, and, indeed, in what kind of environment they want to live in the rest of their life. We feel these are things for which a relevant education should be preparing youth.

Overall Recommendations

Our experiences indicate that the process involved in the environmental education demonstration program are basically sound both theoretically and in practice. We feel that to provide the maximum opportunity for youth to participate in this alternative learning setting, it should be offered in the public schools. Limitations on class size, meeting after school hours, and the lack of school credit were major disadvantages to maximizing participation in the alternative school. These constraints could be overcome by having the program integrated into the public school system. At the same time, however, the constraints of operating in a public school mentioned previously must be reconciled.

We recognize that the alternative school offered the only community problem solving class in the entire school experience of the participants. We were part time in their lives last year and only a minute point in their lifetime. Their self-concept and political efficacy was strengthened as a result of the program. We are not certain whether the participants will be highly involved in community problem solving as adults. Developing the environmental awareness and learning political skills requires much more involvement than a one year course. It requires continuous exposure and involvement in school from kindergarten through the 12th grade. We strongly urge that school systems consider environmental awareness and problem solving as an integral part of the school program.